

Minneapolis Planning Department
Minneapolis Heritage Preservation Commission
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MEMORANDUM

DATE: June 13, 2002

TO: The Honorable Gary Schiff, Chair
Zoning and Planning Committee
Members of the City Council

FROM: Amy Lucas

RE: Historic Variance for 2402 4th Avenue South

At the public hearing of June 11, 2002, the Minneapolis Heritage Preservation Commission (HPC) reviewed an application by Dream Home Development for a Certificate of Appropriateness and an historic variance for the multi-family building located at 2402 4th Avenue South. The new construction is located within the Washburn-Fair Oaks Historic District and the design has been approved by the HPC. The applicant applied for an historic variance for the following:

- 1) To reduce the front yard setback from 27 feet to 23 feet to allow for an open front porch that will bring the new building into design compliance with the historic district architecture.

A. HPC FINDINGS:

At the public hearing of June 11, 2002, Planning staff recommended that the HPC adopt the following findings and forward the historic variance to City Council for approval:

1. The R4 Multiple-Family District requires a front yard setback of 15 feet or the established front yard of the closest residential building, whichever is greater. MCO 546.160. The property immediately south of the applicant's corner building has an established front yard of 27 feet.
2. The zoning code allows open porches to project up to 6 feet into the required front yard of a single or two family dwelling. Porches may extend the entire width of the dwelling. MCO 535.280.

3. The applicant's existing three-unit building has a front yard setback of 27 feet. The addition of a small front porch is a reasonable use of the property but is not allowed by the official controls. Therefore, strict adherence to the zoning regulations would cause undue hardship.
4. The existing building is located within the Washburn-Fair Oaks Historic District and is subject to the district's design guidelines. Therefore, the circumstances upon which the request for a variance is based are unique to the property and have not been created by the applicant.
5. The open porch will extend not more than 4 feet into the required front yard, and will be not more than 10 feet wide. It may not be enclosed with windows, screens or walls.
6. The addition of a small open porch to the front of the existing building will make the design and appearance of the building more compatible with other properties in the historic district. Therefore, granting of the variance will be in keeping with the spirit and intent of the ordinance, and will not alter the essential character of the area or be injurious to other property.

HPC RECOMMENDATION:

The HPC recommends that the City Council adopt the HPC findings and approve an historic variance to vary the front yard setback, subject to the following conditions:

1. The front yard may be reduced from 27 feet to 23 feet to allow the addition of an open front porch not more than 10 feet wide.
2. The front porch shall not be enclosed with windows, screens or walls, but must include handrails not more than 3 feet high and not more than 50 percent opaque.
3. Staff must approve plan of the front porch before construction begins.

PLANNING STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Planning Department staff concurs with the HPC recommendation of June 11, 2002.

Attachments:

HPC Staff Report

Application for Historic Variance

NOTE: Additional supporting documents are available for viewing in the office of the City Clerk. For more information, please contact the Committee Coordinator.